

CHILD STUDY

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Federation for Child Study

CHILD STUDY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, Inc.

Bulletin

For the purpose of helping parents make their parenthood more intelligent, more efficient, and of the highest use to their children.

Vol. 2

DECEMBER, 1924

No. 1

Books for Children

READING is one of the most vital instruments in our adjustment to life and for most children it constitutes a real source of inspiration and influence. The selection of books for the child is therefore of great importance and by choosing wisely, we can determine the type of influence which books shall exert upon him and to a certain extent, insure his continued love of reading. In books, the child finds not only the information which he requires, but ethical guidance and moral stimulus, understanding and insight into life, vicarious participation in heroic deeds and adventures. If the book makes but one such contribution to the child's life, it may be considered valuable.

There is no universal and unchanging standard for the "good book." The child's interest changes from day to day and a useful book to-day may be a futile one to-morrow. Changes are constantly taking place in art and science, in social and political life, in ideals and standards, and these changes, reflected in literature, should keep the child in touch with present and future, as well as past. To do this, it must meet him at his intellectual level.

Dr. Kirkpatrick has said, "In the realm of juvenile fiction there is a great source of power for enriching and

inspiring life through the development of a love of beauty in form and character through a broader outlook upon the world and the recognition of moral standards and fair play"

For the youngest reader, the book is usually a source of entertainment, since the story interest is predominant. This story interest has always been used as a channel for stimulation and instruction. The folk tales of all peoples satisfy this interest and at the same time give crude interpretations of nature in keeping with the child's mental and emotional development. They reach

his imagination at a time when he can easily project himself into the personality of the hero and thus enrich his vicarious experience. To be sure, the morals of such tales are usually questionable; nevertheless, these primitive stories and legends have a value, if carefully selected. The best antidote for the undesirable fairy tale is the desirable one drawn from various sources and peoples so that the child's outlook may be widened by contrasting modes of life and thought.

As the child grows older, he is capable of responding to more complex situations and appeals; but life and action are always the essentials of interest. The personal elements

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Loge Seats..... 1.25	Balcony Seats in blocks of ten or more..... .50

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The Federation for Child Study*

that make the earlier forms of literature so appealing to the younger child may now be found in history and biography. Heroes of myths and legends may be supplanted by the heroes of everyday life. A marked tendency in present-day publication of children's books is the increasing number of good biographies. We have always had the lives of martyrs and heroes but the noteworthy fact about present-day biographies is that the stories are permitted to point their own morals.

Like the fictional story for the younger child, the non-fictional book should deal with conflicts of ideals and ambitions, with achievement and failure. Above all, in selecting books of this class, we must guard against those which make for intolerance and bigotry. Books should carry the child beyond his neighborhood and country and bring him in contact with the finest men and women of all times and places.

In their desire to give their children only such literature as time has proved worthy, many parents avoid the new books altogether. But because of our greater knowledge of the child mind and our increasing attention to its needs, the newer literature is usually better adapted to reaching the interest, understanding and emotions of the young reader. While it is true that the older books represent the survivals of a long selective process, in some respects, later books, written especially for children, have a decided advantage over their tried competitors. Many of the old favorites can no longer be recommended because they represent outgrown ideals and our children have need of a new vision. This is especially true of nature and science books. The child must know the actual world as fully as possible. This world includes rich racial traditions and long accepted truths and he will need to assimilate this background. The classics are an essential factor in his development but it is necessary to realize that classics are always and everywhere in the process of making.

Guidance in reading, like all other efforts in the direction of child development, must take into account individual differences. Literature must reach the child's interest on a wholesome and suitable plane. A book must be not only "harmless" but must have positive quality to recommend it. If it is informative, such information must be reliable and if it deals with human relationships it must do so with understanding and insight. If it is intended merely to amuse, a perfectly legitimate purpose, the amusement it offers must be wholesome and not vulgar.

There is a constant temptation for parents to purchase series of books which offer to save them the trouble of selection and investigation. Such series are being published in increasing numbers and are typical of a period which demands "short cuts" in every phase of life. Because of our own inadequacy and impatience these sets may seem of real value. They assume however a standardization of needs and desires which never exists. Their purchase may save effort but it also robs the parent of his most stimulating privilege, that of choosing with the child the answer to his need at a particular time. Its possession can never have the valuable stimulus of novelty which each separate book can bring with it. It is better that the child should get accustomed to consulting authoritative sources rather than simplified versions of universal knowledge written down to him and often distorted.

Much thought has been given to the subject of literature for younger children but the problem of the transition period between juvenile and adult reading needs as much consideration. There should be less distrust of contemporary literature in relation to adolescent reading. Good contemporary novels are as valuable to the young reader of our day as the work of Scott and Dickens to the past generation. There will of course be much in the good current novel that the young reader will not comprehend but he will get what he can and will ordinarily ignore what does not concern him. The adolescent must become acquainted with serious fiction so that his outlook be not fixed at childish levels by the continued reading of hackneyed romance and adventure. Parents should keep this need in mind when they are themselves reading contemporary fiction.

The child should begin to accumulate his own books at an early age and should also learn to borrow books from libraries. It is through such familiarity that he will learn to discriminate between books which are worth owning and those that are just of passing interest.

It is well to remember that a child's taste for good books can best be cultivated by environment and precept. The wise parent will approach this subject as well as all others relating to child guidance, in an humble spirit and will refrain from imposing his choice upon his children. The child raised in a home where real interests bear upon the literature discussed, where parents select their own books with discrimination, is likely to accept the standards of his environment in this as in other aspects of life.

Child Study Groups

Minutes of the Meeting of Chapter 11

Topic: Fairy Tales.

Sources: Adler: *Moral Instruction for Children*.

Moore: *Principles in Selection of Stories for Kindergarten*, I. K. U. Report, 1913.

Montessori: *Current Opinion*, Jan. 1922, pp. 72-87.

Lowell: *Literary Digest*, May 20, 1919, pp. 32-63.

Nielson: *Dial*, May 14, p. 61.

The discussion of Fairy Tales conducted by Dr. Schoenfeld, dealt with the subject from both the educational and the psycho-analytic points of view.

In a study of the history and origin of the fairy tale, we are struck by its universality of type, its wide distribution and its persistence through the literature of peoples widely separated in race, religion and geographical location.

In the educational world, the controversy between those who advocate and those who oppose the fairy tale seems unending. Most educators agree on the elimination of the "harmful" fairy tale, with its emphasis on horror, pain, cruelty, trickery or brutality. Dr. Annie C. Moore, specialist in Children's Literature at Teachers College, believes that the fairy tale must be carefully edited and selected, especially for the pre-school child. It is important to know the child to whom the story is to be told and to consider its possible effect upon his emotional life. Stories for the very young child should deal with familiar and immediate things and so deepen and vivify his sense of his own relationships. Lucy Sprague Mitchell, in her "Here and Now" stories, has aimed to do just that. Professor Moore feels that after the child has become orientated in his physical environment and has acquired a sense of social values, the well-selected fairy tale has a place. But stories of witches, ogres and wicked giants are likely to cause mental conflict and terror and should be eliminated from the reading matter of all young children. In his "Moral Instruction for Children," Professor Adler also recommends elimination of harmful, superstitious and immoral elements, such as the success of trickery and cunning and the kind of evil that is beyond the child's experience.

Professor Montessori, whose crusade against fairy tales stirred the educational world a short time ago, feels that "the fairy tale plunges the

child into the supernatural and merely prolongs his period of mental confusion," that "it develops his dread of reality and terror of the actual."

Professor William Nielson of Smith College says of fairy tales, "The most charitable way to dismiss them would be to say that for their time they were all right," and Katharine Devereaux Blake declares against them unequivocally. Amy Lowell believes that Grimms' Fairy Tales had better be suppressed because of their brutality and violence but recommends the inimitable stories of Hans Christian Anderson.

It is generally conceded that the finer type of fairy tale should be preserved, that it offers the rhythm—grotesque, weird and droll—"that the child needs to rest him from the dangers and terrors that fascinate him." Professor George Partridge of Clark University states, "Fear, imagination and ignorance make life hard for the child. In fairy tales, his desires for himself are realized. It is his compensation for being little and helpless."

Most educators agree on retaining those fairy tales which emphasize the right social relationships in the larger life and the home; that dwell upon the obligation of keeping one's promise; that teach that kindness pays and that envy does not and that friendship toward men and animals has its own reward. The right kind of fairy tale will always have its place in education.

From the psycho-analytic point of view, an analysis of fairy tales discloses their resemblance to dreams and to the fantasies of neurotics and psychotics. Like these, they re-arrange or re-create the world "nearer to the heart's desire." There is, in many tales, the tendency to identification with the wish object, so common to psychotics. Strength is given by magic belts, invisibility by cloaks, perpetual youth by the waters of life, riches by gift. Weak and pitiful heroes prevail and the ineffectual human attains sudden power and grandeur. Wicked witches or cruel people who stand in the way of fulfilment of desires are boiled in oil or devoured by beasts. In fairy tales, the symbolism of magic and myths and the symbolism of dreams overlap. A characteristic of primitive magic is the personification of abstract qualities, these being represented by animals, fairies, witches, etc.

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BULLETIN

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VOL. 2

No. 1

Christmas belongs to the children. In all our planning and thinking for the holiday season, it is the children who occupy the center of the picture. The stage is set for them—and the joyousness of their Christmas morning and the happiness of their Christmas holidays become the objects of our greatest concern.

It is the spirit of the season. Why should this spirit not be kept burning the year round? It is toward this end that the Federation for Child Study reiterates, at this time, its annual New Year's Resolution: To devote its utmost efforts to the "purpose of helping parents make their parenthood more intelligent, more efficient, and of the highest use to their children."

Summer fading, winter comes—
Frosty mornings, tingling thumbs,
Window robins, winter rooks,
And the picture story-books.

Water now is turned to stone,
Nurse and I can walk upon;
Still we find the flowing brooks,
In the picture story-books.

All the pretty things put by,
Wait upon the children's eye,
Sheep and shepherds, trees and crooks,
In the picture story-books.

We may see how all things are,
Seas and cities, near and far,
And the flying fairies' looks,
In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise,
Happy chimney-corner days,
Sitting safe in nursery nooks,
Reading picture story-books.

—Robert Louis Stevenson.

Federation Activities

On Wednesday afternoon, December 3rd, the Annual Christmas Exhibit of Children's Books was opened with an address by Mr. Willy Pogany, the famous illustrator, who spoke on the "Arabian Nights Stories." Mr. Pogany has recently illustrated a volume of these tales and is a sympathetic student of the Oriental viewpoint. He pointed out that the Oriental builds his world from his dreams and desires and takes miracles for granted, while we base our lives on practical facts which may have no more basis in reality than an Arabian Night's tale. Both are founded upon faith and imagination. The Eastern concept of moral and ethical standards is totally unlike that of the West. "The Arabian Nights" tales are accepted as facts, not as fairy tales, by the Oriental. They should not be treated as separate stories but are structurally and spiritually bound together.

On Wednesday, December 10th, Dr. Max Schoen, Head of Department of Education at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, Pa., spoke for the Federation on the new methods for measuring musical talent and the validity of such tests. The tests are concerned altogether with the matter of musical production, rather than with musical education or appreciation in general. The aim is to find those best fitted by native endowment to achieve the maximum of accomplishment and to determine both the musical instrument and the best method suited to each individual case. It aims to eliminate the tremendous expenditure of time, energy and money wasted upon pupils who lack the necessary qualifications for artistic musical performance. The artist is born and not made, according to Dr. Schoen. Training merely develops what already exists potentially and this potential power for musical production which we call talent can be discovered and the degree to which an individual is endowed with it can be ascertained by rigid scientific procedure even before training is begun. Talent for music consists of several groups of talents functioning together, each fulfilling a definite role, and it is these specific capacities that are measured. Upon the results of these tests an evaluation is made of the amount of musical endowment possessed by the subject. Dr. Schoen exhibited a chart showing the ratings of six music pupils who had been tested. The results indicated not only their talents as a whole, but their individual weaknesses and strong points and for what musical instrument each was best suited.

Concerning Toys

What a bewildering sight is a toy shop, especially when we are trying to select a gift. We go from counter to counter. Shall we choose by color, size or price, or shall we endeavor to make a choice based upon the idea of giving to the individual child, something upon which he can exert his powers, be he a one-year-old or a twelve-year-old—in short, something which will be, not only pretty and exciting, but something that he can *do with*. We must remember that in early life, the child is spending all of his time in getting acquainted with the world about him. He is interested, therefore, not only in touching, but in actually manipulating, in tearing and bending, building up and throwing down. It is essential that we give the young child toys that lend themselves to such purposes.

How often have we watched a fond aunt or uncle bring the child a new toy—an auto! The uncle turns the key and lo! the auto runs all about the nursery floor. The child is delighted. The auto is wound up again and once more it goes across the floor, while the child grows more and more impatient to handle the toy himself. He wants to know what makes the wheels go round. Finally he discovers the spring. He tries to turn it and the mechanism breaks. At once the adult says, "Such a destructive child! He breaks all his toys!"

"Destructive!" Not at all! He is not wilfully breaking the auto. He merely wants to *know* and his knowledge can only come with sensory experience. He must handle, hold, take apart. This activity is of the greatest importance to the child's development and we can bring it to its highest point only if we give the young child toys that will both stimulate his imagination and lend themselves to experimentation.

Blocks are valuable toys for boys and girls. Not tiny blocks, not just beautifully colored ones, nor necessarily those of intricate shape, but blocks with which the child can build a house, a boat, a train, as suits his fancy best. However crudely he constructs it, the result is the product of his own hands and mind and as such it gives him immeasurable satisfaction. When the child has been provided with blocks, he must be provided also with some place where the house that he builds may stay a little while, at least until Daddy sees it or until he finds it no longer worth while. The place where the finished product may remain is even more important than the building mate-

rials. If the child builds his house only to learn that before supper-time every block must be put away, all the delight in creation is destroyed.

It is surprising to see what interesting things children can make from waste materials. They can play their way into work with whatever is at hand and the greater the variety of material to do with, the greater their possibility for development.

Young children can handle tools, but we must be sure that when we give them a hammer we also give them wood to hammer on, when we give them scissors that we provide paper or material for them to cut into. A child does not ordinarily destroy furniture with a hammer, nor write on walls, if he has a board to hammer and paper to write upon. Let us also provide a bit of wall space where he can display his finished product. We can stretch a cord along the wall whereon he can fasten his drawing or we can hang up a piece of burlap to which he can attach his work. Such display may arouse his own critical faculties and stimulate him to further effort.

The little girl who makes her own doll house out of an empty box which she then paints and papers herself, will get more joy from it than she would derive from the most expensive doll house bought completely furnished. Undoubtedly the perfection of the expensive toy will thrill and delight her temporarily. Her pride will be gratified by its ownership and by the impression it makes upon other children. But in the long run, it is the house that she has created herself, whose furnishings and decorations she can arrange at will, that holds her affection. We all know traditionally, that the rag doll remains the favorite doll despite our little girl's temporary affection for her sleeping doll or her talking doll. It is the rag doll that she can take comfortably to bed with her.

One word about a place for toys: a shelf, however crude, but one which the child can reach, or a corner in a closet, also within reach, is essential.

Just as important as his toys, are the stones or butterflies or stamps which the child collects with the greatest seriousness and for these, too, there must be time and place.

It is not the cost of the toy that is of importance, but the use which the child makes of it; it is not the value of the things he collects but the satisfaction that comes from following his own interests and acquiring knowledge in his own way.

—Violet A. Jersawit.

Child Study Groups

(Continued from page 3)

Psycho-analysts, like educators, differ as to the value of fairy tales. Dr. Hugo Hellmuth considers them valuable for the stimulation of the imagination. Dr. Brill, on the other hand, believes that they represent the abnormal gratification of desires, regression from all effort, the encouragement of primitive and archaic thinking and that they hinder normal development and adjustment to reality. Between these opposed views is the one which recognizes the value of the symbol as a carrier of energy, furnishing an outlet for otherwise suppressed psychic material. The creation of the symbol to satisfy some otherwise unfulfilled wish is the basis of artistic creation. Many children find in well-chosen fairy tales, an outlet for their hidden complexes and desires and the value and danger of these stories are similar to those of the movie and the drama.

Discussion:

During the general discussion the question was raised as to whether the child overcomes his complex through the fairy tale. In the opinion of Dr. Schoenfeld, he does, through what is called mental catharsis, the process by which an internal emotion is dissipated in its symbolic expression. It is the same emotional catharsis that the adult gets through the drama or novel. In answering a question as to the value of such stories as those in Lucy Sprague Mitchell's "Here and Now," the material for which was collected from actual children in the City and Country School, it was suggested that this type of story does not appeal to all children; that many prefer stories of unfamiliar things and people. The first requisite is to study the child himself. He is first absorbed in himself and we must teach him to adapt himself to objective reality. If we offer him something which delays this adaptation and prolongs fantasy, we incur the danger of fostering maladjustments. It is at the time that a child is making his first step, that we offer him a fairy tale and we must be careful that he does not remain in the wishing stage in attempting to meet life—that he does not obtain in fantasy what the normal individual realizes actually. We must remember that the child is becoming divorced from himself, for the world outside him is creating a condition which makes it necessary for him to give up his former conceptions. The fairy tale may call the child back to the infantile stage. If it is difficult for the

adult to meet the hard, cold world, so much more difficult is it for the child to do so and so much greater is the temptation to find refuge in a world of fantasy. In the fairy tale, the hero realizes his desires by wishing, rather than striving, and obtains his end by the aid of outside forces. Here is where the danger lies, for the child must be taught to obtain realization through real effort. We must remember that stimulus is commensurate with reaction. A fairy tale is acceptable, only if the hero realizes his desires through his own efforts.

The Speakers' Bureau

The Speakers' Bureau has this season extended its activities into many new fields, reaching both through radio talks and direct personal addresses, new audiences, completely heterogeneous and of countless numbers.

Recent invitations to our speakers to address Sunday school Parents' Associations of various denominations, mark a definite step forward. Heretofore the work of the Bureau has been confined more particularly to talks for Parent groups of day schools, but we feel that in reaching the Sunday school parents we are opening a hitherto untouched field of wide scope and possibilities.

A series of six talks to governesses and mothers' helpers as well as to the mothers themselves, at the Ethical Culture School, has also opened an interesting field of work, and has brought gratifying results in expressed interest and the requests for "more."

At the Lincoln School a series of bi-weekly discussions has grown into a Parents' Study Class. Both groups mark a new step in study groups for parents in that the meetings are held in the school during school hours.

In addition to this growth of the service in and around New York City, field work has resulted in interesting varied groups of parents, teachers and social workers all through the middle west. Not only have new chapters been formed and new individual members added as a direct result, but leaders in work with children in many communities have pledged their efforts in enlisting the serious interest of parents in the child study movement.

We are serving an ever-increasing number of Parent Associations and Kindergarten Mothers' Clubs of the Public Schools everywhere in New York City, with speakers on special topics such as "The Responsibilities of Parenthood," "Obedience," "Habit Training," "Sex Education," etc.

Book Reviews

Social Aspects of Psycho-Analysis—Ernest Jones, M. D.; James Glover, M. D.; J. C. Flugel, M. D. Eder, Barbara Low, Ella Sharper—Williams and Norgate, London, 1924.

This volume comprises a series of six lectures delivered in England about a year ago by members of the British Psycho-Analytical Society under the auspices of the Sociological Society.

Since the course was planned for persons who were not psycho-analysts, the first lecture ("Psycho-Analysis and Sociology") is largely explanatory of the psycho-analytical theory, and gives a very clear, concise and moderate exposition of the Freudian School of thought. The other chapters, "Man the Individual," "The Family," and "Education," indicate that the book is of interest not merely to sociologists for whom it was primarily intended, but also to every intelligent parent and teacher. Indeed, it is significant for parents to read: "Even if psycho-analysis can do nothing more at present than convince society that, to a surprising extent, its good citizens are made or marred in the nursery, this in itself would be a valuable contribution to the science of sociology": and in the next chapter; "Our knowledge and control of social affairs are ultimately dependent upon our knowledge of the psychological factors operative in family life." The chapter entitled "Psycho-Analysis in Politics" throws a new and original light on many political institutions and crises and though not perhaps immediately helpful for the problems of the parent, it is so enlightening in a speculative and sometimes humorous vein, that every mother reading it must perforce be startled at the realization that her nursery regime may change the fate of nations.

Altogether the book is a helpful and a stimulating one. It is interesting and not too technical for the lay reader and being written originally for the scientific reader, it is free from the defects that mar so many of the writings intended for popular consumption. Dr. Jones considers only the Freudian viewpoint and makes no mention of the Zurich School.

E. M. O.

The Child: His Nature and Needs. M. V. O'Shea, Editor. The Children's Foundation, 1924.

This book meets an opportune need for parents, in fact for all people who are interested in the welfare of children and who appreciate the need for revision and re-inforcement of their own knowledge and opinion in regard to the physical, mental and moral well-being of the rising generation.

Each chapter of the book may be taken as a unit for study individually or in groups, but the book, taken as a whole, fulfills its purpose in its consistent appeal for associating the science and practice of child development and training.

The three parts of the book cover "The Present Status of Our Knowledge of Child Nature," "The Present Status of Our Knowledge of Child Well-Being," and "The Present Status of Our Knowledge of Education."

The contributions of the individual chapters are by well-known authorities in the field of biology, mental hygiene and

direct education. A very helpful bibliography is appended with each topic and there is a brief biographical sketch of each contributor.

B. G.

Child Labor and the Constitution. Raymond C. Fuller. Thomas Y. Crowell, 1924.

An understanding discussion of child labor and its conquest through child welfare. It should be especially interesting and helpful to women who want all children to share in the advantages they seek to secure for their own children. It is written by an able, sympathetic worker, well known in the field of child labor reform. His statements are based on many authoritative reports of statistical investigations conducted by experts. He interprets the figures in the light of his constructive purpose to make more of the good things of life available to all children.

L. C. G.

Books Received for Review

The Play Movement in the United States. Clarence E. Rainwater. University of Chicago Press. \$2.75.

Foundations of Personality. Abraham Myerson. Little, Brown Co. \$2.25.

Barrie Marvel. Charles Vince. Little, Brown Co. \$2.00.

Beyond the Pleasure Principle. Sigmund Freud. Boni and Liveright. \$1.50.

The Home Maker. Dorothy C. Fisher. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.00.

Sex Development. Bernard Bernard. Health and Life Publishing Co. \$1.25.

Suggested Readings

From Current Periodicals

School and Home, Parents and Teachers Assn., Ethical Culture School, 33 Central Park West. Nov. 1924.

A Health Number, dealing with the mental and physical health of the school child.

A Glimpse of the New Schools in Germany, by Gertrude Knapp—School and Society, Dec. 13th, 1924.

An interesting presentation of various methods and ideals in educating the youth of Germany to meet the political and social changes.

The Three-Year-Olds: An Experiment, by Barbara Greenwood—Childhood Education, Dec. 1924.

Presenting the adjustment of the three-year-old to the older members of the group, showing how the cooperation of the parent helped to make the development a vital one, educationally.

Meditations of a Wage-Earning Wife, by Jane Littell—Atlantic Monthly, Dec. 1924.

Altho each case necessarily presents individual problems for solution, this article leads to clarity of thought and the development of an attitude of mind toward the economic question in the marriage relation.

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The Annual Report of the President with a full report of the year's activities of the Federation for Child Study is in preparation. This will appear with the January Bulletin, instead of with the December one, as was previously announced.

A report of the proceedings of the Annual Conference of Chapter Representatives is also being prepared for early distribution.

Publications

of the
Federation for Child Study

Outlines of Child Study—

A Manual for Parents and Teachers

Published by The Macmillan Co., 1922.....\$1.80
and postage

Sons and Daughters

By Sidonie M. Gruenberg.....\$1.10
and postage

Studies in Child Training.....each .10

Obedience (Series I, No. 1.)

Punishment (Series I, No. 2.)

Parents' Book List, 1922.

Free to Members. Non-members......25

Supplement to Parents' Book List, 1923-1924.

Free to Members. Non-members......10

Suggestions for a Parent's Book-Shelf.

Free to Members. Non-members......05

Supplements to Children's Book List, 1922, 1923, 1924.

Free to Members. Non-members......10

A Selected List of Music Books for Children.

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Play School Manual, 1919......50

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